

# Indiana House of Representatives

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## News and Information

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

April 25, 2005

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## REP. SMITH NAMED "CITIZEN OF THE YEAR"

Indianapolis – State Rep. Vernon G. Smith (D-Gary) received the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Tenth District's "Citizen of the Year" award for a lifetime of public service.

Fraternity officials announced the award during the 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Tenth District Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. Omega Psi Phi is a national African-American service fraternity. Its tenth district covers most of the Midwest, including the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. More than 50 chapters make up the tenth district. Each provided a nominee for this prestigious award.

"It is a tremendous honor to be considered for 'Citizen of the Year,'" explained Dr. Smith. "The other nominees have made remarkable contributions to their communities. I am humbled to be chosen among so many outstanding men of achievement. Omega Psi Phi is one of the truly great organizations making an impact in communities throughout the country, a positive impact that will be felt for generations."

The notable accomplishments mentioned during the ceremony included the annual Harvest Feast Dinner for the needy, the African-American Achievers Youth Corps. mentoring program, the annual cleanup of a highway that runs through Gary, the Christmas Penny Drive to raise funds for poor families, and his years of political service. He likewise has organized numerous other charitable activities in the Gary area. Fraternity officials acknowledged Dr. Smith's lifetime of service to his community, a commitment he has had since his teenage years.

Dr. Smith received the Alpha Kappa Kappa Chapter's "Citizen of the Year" award in November. He was awarded the Tenth District's "Omega Man of the Year" award last year. Also, in 2004, Dr. Smith received his local chapter's "Citizen of the Year" and "Omega Man of the Year" awards.

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated has been active in numerous initiatives, including the National Economic Empowerment Program, the perpetuation of the Black Male Project, the Assault on Illiteracy Program, the National Social Action Program, the South Africa Project, the United Negro College Fund, and the Senior Citizens Project. The organization also offers financial assistance to college students through the fraternity's scholarship program.

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***This release can be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.IN.gov/H14>***